(ii) The response from the public to use e-bill post is growing gradually. Under e-bill post, since the date of inception, *i.e.* 31.01.2002 till 31.07.2004, the total bill collection is Rs. 1248.77 crores. The commission earned by the Department is Rs. 39,62,405.00.

Delay in delivery of mails

2429. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even registered letters are also deliberately delayed for petty tips by postmen in sub-urban areas of North Bihar;

(b) if not, the reasons for delayed delivery of registered letters to the addressees after the lapse of nine/ten days at Bhikhanpura District Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Khabra post office;

(c) whether it is also a fact that during the month of June, 2004 such cases have been reported in this regard;

(d) whether there were earlier complaints against post office/ postmen of this post office also; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken to prevent such recurrences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) There is no delayed delivery of registered letters after a lapse of nine/ten days at Bhikhanpura, District Muzaffarpur through Khabra post office;

(c) No such case was received during the month of June, 2004.

(d) Only two complaints were received in May, 2004. On enquiry it was found that these letters were delivered to the addressee correctly on the same day of receipt of the letters referred in the complaints.

(e) (i) One Shri Dhiraj Kumar preferred a complaint on 21.05.2004 that Chennai Speed Post Letter No. EE 419501424 IN dated 05.05.2004 was delivered to him on 19.05.2004. On enquiry it was found that the Speed Post under reference was delivered

to his brother on 11.05.2004 that is on the very day of receipt of the article.

(ii) One Shri Vikash Kumar Nirala preferred a complaint on 28.05.2004 that Chennai Speed Post Letter No. 419507360 dated 06.05.2004 was delivered to him on 17.05.2004. On enquiry it was found that the speed post article under reference was delivered to his brother on 12.05.2004 *i.e.* on the very day of receipt of the article.

Prompt delivery of postcards and envelopes

2430. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that ordinary postcards and envelopes are not delivered in a reasonable time to the concerned persons in the Districts of U.P. especially in Allahabad; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what steps Government propose to take for prompt delivery of the postcards and envelopes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) There is no complaint of non-delivery or delayed delivery in ordinary postcards and envelopes from any district of UP. especially in Allahabad.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above. However, monitoring of delivery function through supervisors, Live Mail Surveys, Test Letters etc. is a continuous activity.

Telephone facilities in villages

†2431. SHRI BALAWANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in the country where telephone facility has been provided during the last three years and till date;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.